

## **Thematic workshop 2 Entrepreneurship and skills**

Joris Spaan, active for an educational centre for the paper industry

Monica Menapace project officer LLLight'in'Europe

Anne Randerson, European Commission, DG employment

Maria Podlasek, European Commission, Education and Culture (*special guest*)

A female working for a research department

A male working in the public sector, with experience in the business sector

Researchers from LLLight'in'Europe

Harm Biemans, Wageningen University

Thomas Lans, Wageningen University

Yvette Baggen, Wageningen University

Thomas presented some slides, followed by a discussion.

### **Thomas Lans**

#### *Positioning of our work*

One can look at entrepreneurship from an independent entrepreneurship perspective, but also from an organizational perspective: intrapreneurship. Depending on the output, and whether you focus on the whole process, or an independent or organizational perspective, you can look differently at entrepreneurship.

In economies that are efficiency-driven, one generally sees more independent entrepreneurship, but in economies which are innovation-driven, entrepreneurial employee activity (employees' involvement in entrepreneurial, innovation activities) might be higher.

#### *Research approach*

Data was collected among students (following entrepreneurial courses, and, therefore, latent, early-stage entrepreneurs) and employees (i.e. entrepreneurial employee activity).

Opportunity competence was the central, main competence of interest in our research. Data was collected in a specific industry.

#### *Findings*

Those who are more active in innovative work behaviour, also get more ideas adopted by the management. In return, specific human capital explains innovative work behaviour. Those who are capable of generating business ideas, and evaluating their potential success, scored higher on innovative work behaviour. What also contributes to higher innovative work behaviour, were self-assessed self-efficacy and social networks.

The results show that opportunity identification and evaluation are distinct abilities. So, those who excel in generating a lot of ideas, are not necessary those who are good at evaluating their potential success. Furthermore, the latent entrepreneurs generate more ideas than the employees, and they use different evaluative frameworks. Also, groups outperform individuals. To conclude, CPS incrementally predicts opportunity competence.

Learning and job tasks appeared to influence innovation performance. Those who faced more complex problems at work, also got more ideas adapted by their management, just as those who experienced higher levels in how they wanted to do their work.

### *In conclusion & discussion*

Because of the specific industry we collected data in, we should be careful in generalizing them to other industries.

What is the role of specific entrepreneurial competencies for students and workers, and how can those competencies be fostered and developed on the individual, team, and organizational level?

We identified three routes:

1. Via competence development?
2. Via job task/learning context?
3. Via entrepreneurship education in initial education (independent vs. corporate)?

Q1: what is the role of family in entrepreneurship, is there a role of family?

A: Thomas: Yes, there is, Thomas (who has his own business), even comes from an entrepreneurial family. However, an entrepreneurial family does not guarantee any success.

Maria: family could serve as a role model.

### **Maria Podlasek** (*opened the discussion*)

Entrepreneurship is considered to be a life skill. In the framework of key competencies, eight key competencies were identified for lifelong learning. Entrepreneurship is one of them. So, entrepreneurship is considered a lifelong competence (i.e. knowledge, skills, attitudes). It involves the ability to turn ideas into action, creativity, problem-solving, innovation, and managing such process. It is more than just setting up a business. Basically, entrepreneurship competencies are needed in all kind of situations. Social entrepreneurship combines entrepreneurial operation and social values.

First, we thought that entrepreneurship was only something for those who are very talented. However, now we believe in a holistic, integrated framework (i.e. social entrepreneurship). It can contribute to solving societal problems in an innovative and creative way.

The Europe entrepreneurship 20/20 action plan, aims to realize at least one practical entrepreneurship experience per pupil/student. Schools need to discover how to provide such an opportunity to students, and also how to offer an entrepreneurial environment.

Another issue is teacher education. Teachers are role models for their pupils.

In mobility (e.g. Erasmus) programmes, students can go abroad to work in the field and gain experience in entrepreneurship. These kind of programmes have a big impact on students.

### **Discussion**

Thomas: entrepreneurship should become a broader topic, and not only focus on start-ups. He raises three challenges:

1. Connecting schools and work
2. Teacher training and teacher training programmes
3. Assessments

During the discussion, the participants elaborated upon:

- Projects that were focussed on involving teachers in entrepreneurship education. Some good practices were discussed (e.g. from Italy);

- That implementing entrepreneurship education even asks for a (radical) change in the educational system;
- The role of teamwork (among students as well as teachers) in entrepreneurship education (e.g. network for teachers active in entrepreneurship education);
- Adult learning and how managers can be stimulated to think entrepreneurial;
- Whether or not managers from companies are aware of how they could stimulate employee-driven entrepreneurship and innovation.